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RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS 4300
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1290
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0243
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 0284
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TAGS: [PARM](#) [ECON](#) [ENRG](#) [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: GOJ CONFIRMS TO T UNDER SECRETARY TAUSCHER
WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE ASSURANCES FOR 123 AGREEMENT

REF: A. AMMAN 2580
[1](#)B. AMMAN 2498
[1](#)C. AMMAN 2290
[1](#)D. AMMAN 1690

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (S/NF) Summary: Under Secretary Tauscher, during a December 2 visit to Jordan, emphasized to then-Prime Minister Dahabi and other senior Jordanian officials the need for strong commitments on uranium enrichment and reprocessing in order to conclude a 123 Agreement. She explained that due to developments in Iran and North Korea, such commitments were mandatory and did not reflect negatively on Jordan, but rather better positioned Jordan for leadership on nonproliferation issues. She and T Senior Advisor Timbie added that a strengthened agreement would help attract the financing and international partnerships necessary to proceed with the nuclear power program Jordan seeks and we support. PM Dahabi reasserted Jordan's commitment to a safe and secure nuclear energy program and to participating in international efforts to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons. He further highlighted the importance of U.S.-Jordanian relations and said Jordan was willing to provide what the U.S. needs in a side letter, rather than as changes to the Agreement. Tauscher made the case for putting the commitments on enrichment and reprocessing in the agreement itself, and asked the government of Jordan to inform us on whether it can now agree to incorporate these commitments in the agreement, or would continue to propose a side letter. If the latter, the Department would explore the possibility of USG acceptance of a detailed, comprehensive, and negotiated side letter. Dahabi committed the GOJ to provide a response. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (S/NF) Former Prime Minister Nader al-Dahabi opened the

40-minute December 2 meeting with Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher by reasserting Jordan's commitment to establishing a nuclear energy program that is safe and secure. He reviewed the many international agreements and protocols on nuclear security and nonproliferation to which Jordan is a party, stressing that Jordan wants to be a model for other countries considering nuclear energy. He reported that while the seven nuclear cooperation agreements (NCA) that Jordan has signed with Argentina, Canada, China, France, Russia, South Korea, and the UK do not contain the specific assurances on uranium enrichment and reprocessing sought by the U.S., they do include safeguards and the Additional Protocol. He added that Jordan would proceed on the basis of public-private partnerships, which would provide further confidence of peaceful intent. Dahabi stressed Jordan's desire to conclude a 123 Agreement with the U.S. as soon as possible and said that Jordan could provide the commitments the U.S. needs in a side letter, and not the NCA itself.

13. (S/NF) Under Secretary Tauscher acknowledged Jordan's active role in international nonproliferation efforts, its regional leadership on peace and other initiatives, and its long and close partnership with the U.S. She explained it was precisely this record of cooperation and leadership, coupled with regional developments, particularly activities in Iran as well as North Korea, that necessitated strict commitments on enrichment and reprocessing similar to those in the U.S.-UAE agreement. She reviewed the Administration's policy to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, emphasized that the U.S. government speaks with one voice on

this issue, and reminded her Jordanian audience that the U.S. approval process for 123 Agreements requires congressional review and that Congress is emphatic that partners not pursue uranium enrichment or reprocessing. Tauscher and T Senior Advisor Timbie also outlined U.S. and international efforts to ensure a reliable fuel supply. They recognized that Jordan, as a potential uranium producer, had a commercial interest in the future possibility of enrichment. Timbie advised that any independent pursuit of technology to enrich uranium produced in Jordan would be costly and not commercially competitive; a more plausible approach would be for Jordan to partner with a firm which already has world-class technology. In this way, Jordan could gain the commercial benefits of enrichment without an enrichment facility in Jordan. He also advised that conclusion of a solid 123 Agreement would help attract financing and partners, including American companies, to move nuclear energy from study to actual construction.

14. (C/NF) Elaborating on Jordan's nascent nuclear program, Jordan Atomic Energy Commissioner Khaled Toukan reported that to date, Jordan's approach has been driven by economic factors and the desire to build international partnerships. He repeated the PM's statement that the plants would have international operators and stressed that Jordan would rely on the international market. He and Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh stated that due to limited resources and a dependence on imported energy, the nuclear program is vital to Jordan's future. Toukan further argued that absent operational fuel banks, the assurances sought represented operational constraints for Jordan. He concurred that assurances could and should be provided, but in contrast to his colleagues, suggested they be made "once all the mechanisms are in place," referring to fuel banks and other international support.

15. (S/NF) Tauscher asked that the GOJ reconsider putting a commitment not to engage in enrichment or reprocessing in Jordan into the text of the 123 Agreement, and to get back to us on whether Jordan can agree to such an agreement or would continue to seek to put these commitments in a side letter. If the latter, the Department would explore with the Administration, other involved agencies, and the Hill, the possibility of placing the commitments we need in a side letter. She cautioned that such an approach would require considerable bilateral efforts and that any letter would have

to be detailed and comprehensive, with the language negotiated by the two sides. Acknowledging, "the ball is in our court," Dahabi said Jordan would respond on whether it could agree to put the commitments on enrichment and reprocessing in the text, or would prefer a side letter. If the latter, Jordan would prepare elements of a draft side letter for negotiation with the USG. He restated Jordan's eagerness to have a 123 Agreement with the U.S., with FM Judeh adding such an NCA was in the interests of both countries and would send a broader message about the benefits of being a U.S. ally.

¶6. (C) Ambassador reminded Judeh on December 21 of the GOJ's promise to outline in writing the commitments it is prepared to make on enrichment and reprocessing. Judeh answered that a working group had been formed and a response was forthcoming. Ambassador will also address nuclear cooperation and the status of the 123 Agreement with new PM Samir al-Rifa'i in an upcoming courtesy call.

¶7. (U) Meeting Participants

U.S.

Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International
Security Ellen Tauscher
T Senior Advisor Dr. James Timbie
Adam Scheinman, NSC
Natalie E. Brown, Embassy Amman Economic Counselor
(notetaker)

Jordan

Prime Minister Nader al-Dahabi
Chief of the Royal Court Nasser Lozi
Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh
Jordan Atomic Energy Commissioner Dr. Khaled Toukan
Jafar Hassan, Director of International Affairs, Royal Court
Omar Hourani, Director, Prime Minister's Office
Samer Naber, Director, America's Desk, Ministry of Foreign
Affairs

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